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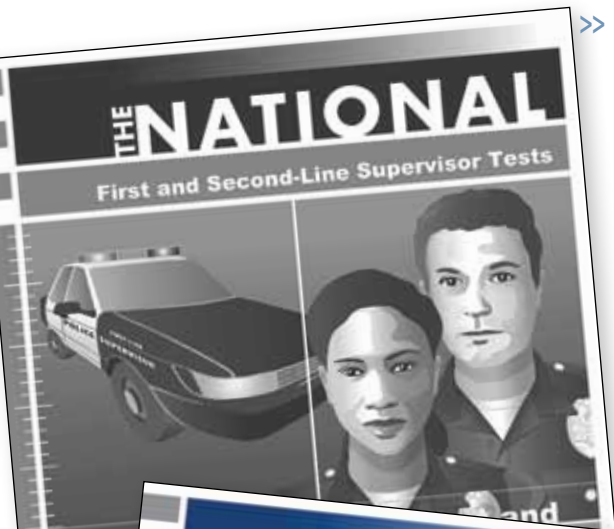
After more than five years under the direction of Michael Bischoff, the Kentucky Association of Chiefs of Police recently named James Pendergraff as its new executive director. A former chief at the Russellville and Madisonville police departments, Pendergraff spent nearly 10 years involved in KACP, learning the ins and outs of the organization. He has served as KACP past president and feels a passion for seeing Kentucky's chiefs, in agencies large and small, advance in professionalism. Pendergraff holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Murray State University. With his experience and background he is prepared to serve members of Kentucky law enforcement agencies from Fulton to Floyd County and everywhere in between. >>

# LEADING THE PACK

Profiling James Pendergraff, new executive director for the Kentucky Association of Chiefs of Police

ABBIE DARST | PROGRAM COORDINATOR





>> **What is your law enforcement background, and how does it make you a good fit for this position?**

I have 32 years full-time law enforcement experience. I started in 1975 at the University of Kentucky Police Department, and worked there for four years. I then went to Madisonville Police Department — Madisonville is where I was born and raised. I worked there until 1997 and retired as a captain. I went back to school and finished up my bachelor's and master's degrees. Then I applied at the Russellville Police Department and served there as

chief for about six years. After I left there, I worked with the Highway Safety Program for about a year and a half. Then the police chief position in Madisonville opened up and the mayor asked if I would take the job, and I did. So, my last 10 years in law enforcement were as a police chief. I've served in a number of capacities in law enforcement from patrol officer to administrative sergeant, to a public information office lieutenant to administrative captain. I served two to three years as a road supervisor. The only position I did not hold was detective. So my career has been rather diverse.

**How long have you been associated with the Kentucky Association of Chiefs of Police — what is your history with the organization?**

I became involved with the chiefs' association through working with the highway safety position, because that position actually is funded through a grant with the chiefs' association. At Russellville, we went through the accreditation program, which is a big part of what KACP does. That process got me more involved. Then I continued that association with KACP after I went to Madisonville as chief. My

last 10 years as a police chief I stayed active in the KACP.

The first year or so, I attended the regional meetings and helped out first vice president, Chief Gary Rainer, then with the Bowling Green Police Department. I was on his conference committee in 2001. I served as the regional chair for the south central region from 2004 to 2005. When I came back to Madisonville in 2007, I was fortunate enough to run for third vice president and be elected. I went through chairs from third vice president to second to first to president. The first vice president is in charge of the conference and conference committee. We actually hosted the conference in Bowling Green. It is quite the undertaking. If you've never put on a conference with a six-digit budget figure, it's quite an ordeal. There is a lot of time and effort that goes into it. It was a learning experience, and I made a lot of good contacts, so it was a good experience.

**When you first retired from Madisonville, did you have any desire to get back into law enforcement in some capacity?**

I didn't want to go back into a sworn position. I thought some of the off-shoot positions, some civilian position, would be great. With my degree, I thought at one time I'd like to teach at a community college. That door was still swinging and I was trying to decide if I wanted to go that route, when this position came open. I thought it was a good opportunity.

**Was the position as executive director one you sought or were asked to fill?**

I had been retired for two years. It's an adjustment when you're retired to go from full-time employment to not working at all. So I had an adjustment getting into the retirement mode. After about two years I'd gotten into it pretty well. But this position came open, and I thought it was time. I was too young to just fully retire. So, I did some soul searching and put in my application. They had a total of eight people apply, and I was fortunate enough to be selected. There were some pretty good folks in there. I think I'm the fifth executive director the association has had since 1971, so that's a pretty good track record. Bob Stone, Larry Gaines, Craig Birdwhistle, Mike Bischoff and then me. Mike started in February 2007, so he had about five years. Craig was there for 10. I'm trying to go back and research and find

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out when the other folks served. I'm a little bit of a history buff. I'd like to get that information on the website. We have the past presidents on our website, but not the past executive directors. I think that would be nice to put on there.

But, it's hard getting back into the work force. This is a part-time position. I can see some weeks it will be more full-time than part-time. There may be some down time, but there will be other weeks that will be pretty busy.

**What are your specific duties as executive director? Are there areas where you would like to increase your involvement or play a larger role?**

I've got a two-page list. My day-to-day responsibilities are the oversight of the organization to help manage those committees with the jobs they are doing, such as the legislative, conference and technology. I also am the contact person for KACP. If you call, you get me.

**How often do KACP members and staff meet?**

The way the constitution is set up, we have six general membership meetings per year and four executive board meetings. We are dealing with an organization that is statewide, so we have people driving from Paducah and all the way from Hazard to attend meetings. So we try to put it in a central location so it's not a burden on anybody to drive a long distance. Usually we have them in Elizabethtown, Lexington or Louisville. If you hold one down in Paducah, you're going to lose the eastern folks, and if you have one in Hazard, you're going to miss the western folks. So we try to plan it centrally.

**What do you see as the current strengths of KACP?**

My predecessor, Michael Bischoff, has done a great job. I can't thank him enough for his years of service. He has built up the

accreditation program, which now is the backbone of the chiefs' association. We started in the early years with just a handful of organizations being accredited every year. This year we're looking at more than 30 being accredited or reaccredited at this year's conference. That's a huge amount. We have one going for its fourth, five-year certificate. We always are glad to get the newcomers for the first time around. But regardless, it's still a process to get reaccredited, and that is a huge part of the program.

Another one of our strengths is looking at legislation and trying to keep our finger on what legislation is on the books, or being proposed, that will affect law enforcement, and what kind of impact it will have on Kentucky's officers. Most departments across the state have less than 10 officers. Louisville, Lexington, Bowling Green or Owensboro, may be able to handle a substantial impact, but for some of those smaller agencies it may be a financial burden or a personnel burden. So we try to monitor that to make sure that the laws being passed don't significantly impact those agencies adversely.

Networking and creating networking opportunities also is one of the association's major strengths. We have a great relationship with the Department of Criminal Justice Training's commissioner's office and support staff. We work with the sheriffs' association, the Fraternal Order of Police and other professional associations throughout the state. We might not agree on everything, but there are a lot of issues that we have in common. We can bond together and work together, and I think that is one strength.

We've been around since 1971 as an association. Since then, we've had some great presidents and great directors who have built those relationships. A lot of times at these meetings, since we are able to see each other face to face, when you pick up that phone and call someone, you know who you're talking to. You have that history, and it's just a great working relationship across the state. Kentucky is large, geographically, but people wise, we are a pretty tight-knit community.

**When you were a chief and part of the association as just a member and committee member, did you recognize >>**

▲ The Kentucky Association of Chiefs of Police offers testing materials to Kentucky law enforcement agencies for recruits, dispatchers, supervisors and more. KACP offers these tests at a discounted rate to help agencies fill their positions with the most qualified individuals. For more information, visit KACP's website at <http://kypolicechiefs.org/index.php/membership-information/testing-material>, or scan this QR code with your smart phone.







PHOTO BY ELIZABETH THOMAS

▲ KACP accreditation personnel meet with University of Kentucky Police Department officials just prior to an on-site evaluation. The University of Kentucky Police Department is one of 79 law enforcement agencies accredited through KACP.

## >> that as a strength and did you see how close knit it was?

When I came as a new chief, you wouldn't believe some of the calls I made to the older guys asking, "Hey, what are you doing about this? I have this issue coming up, how would you handle it? Give me some advice." There were a handful of chiefs I trusted completely. I could call them up day or night and felt like I'd get good advice. It's a good mentoring program. We try to mentor new chiefs coming in, especially through our regions, and regional chairs keep tabs on them and get them into the fold. In many cases, there is no reason to reinvent the wheel. You can call other chiefs and ask what they are doing about this. As a young chief you may have personnel issues; those are some of your biggest headaches, and a lot of these chiefs have been through it. It's a great resource, and a lot of phone calls are made.

## Do you intend to further enhance these strengths to serve the chiefs and agencies across the state and how?

Yes, but it will take time. One of the things former Director Bischoff did was set up a non-profit, tax-exempt foundation where monies are used for training. Also, there is money for police survivors, families and scholarships. It's been set up, but not a lot of money is in there now, because the foundation is in its infancy. I would like to see that built up to where it's a viable

foundation, and we actually can start passing out some money.

I'm also looking at why membership has declined over the years. I think it is a function of the economy. A lot of agencies may have had their chief and several of those in the command structure either as a full, active member or as an associate member. I think some of those agencies have cut back with the economy, so we are seeing a slight decline. I'd like to see it stabilized so we don't lose any more. Hopefully, if it all goes well, we can get our membership up.

It currently costs \$95 for full-time active membership. That doesn't seem like a lot, but if quite a few of your folks in the organization are members, it starts adding up year after year — that's one of the places they start cutting.

I want to keep our training programs topnotch. Each region is required to have so many meetings per year and involve someone coming in as a training speaker for the day. We bring in topnotch training at our conference every year. We're involved with donations for Concerns of Police Survivors, Kentucky Law Enforcement Memorial Foundation and Kentucky Special Olympics. We try to keep a charitable side to us.

We work with a testing company that provides tests for recruits, supervisors and dispatchers. We offer that to our membership at a discounted rate. They

can do that through our website. It's a process where we try to professionalize those folks. Also, if you are promoting to sergeant, lieutenant or captain, they have tests for that too. It's a great system. It has worked really well the past few years. We have a good relationship. It's Tenard and Company out of Chicago and they are a reputable firm.

For our charities, we offer \$500 scholarships for our law enforcement students.

## What legislation is coming up or is of interest to KACP for Kentucky's law enforcement community?

We have a legislative committee with officers and chiefs assigned who have different levels of expertise. This year, we are looking at the enforcement side of drug laws. The hemp legislation is being pushed really hard at this point. There are some alcohol issues we are closely monitoring. Usually the folks in the legislative session will call to get our input. It may not be in written form, it may just be a thumbs up or down — or asking, "How is that going to affect you: Moderately? Substantially?" If it's a very serious situation, we will have boots on the ground in Frankfort in those sessions making sure we are heard.

## The role of accreditation manager has been moved into a separate position — how does the absence of that role allow you to better serve your clientele?

Years ago it was under two separate individuals. Then, when Director Bischoff came in, his expertise was in accreditation, and he was the accreditation manager, so it was a natural flow. When he came in as director, he took on the whole gamut. It has since gotten so large, it's probably the biggest full-time, part-time job we have. Shawn Butler is our new accreditation manager, and he worked with Mike Bischoff for a number of years. He's a great guy, and he's going to do a great job. I can't think of anybody better to put into that position. It's not my area of expertise. I'd be on a huge learning curve to try and step in and do that along with everything else. I think it needs to be split because it has grown so large. You are talking about more than 30 agencies this year alone. They go onsite and do a pre-inspection visit. They also do an after-site follow up. Some agencies ask them to come in before. You may make three to four trips per agency, and you multiply that by 30 agencies. Then there is all the paperwork involved. There are policy manuals to review and onsite inspections. The number of hours that entails is huge. It's a great asset to the association, but to me, it needs to be split because it does take a lot of time and a lot of energy.

Also, it gives me more time to focus on those areas I talked about — the membership, legislation and fundraising. I can give more attention to that. I'm in charge of putting the meetings together, which includes scheduling, agendas and minutes. I can't imagine doing both. It gives me more time to do the things I'm comfortable doing.

## Do you know, approximately, the consistency or rate at which the executive director will be called directly by chiefs across the state for advice or questions?

By the volume of my phone calls and emails, it is pretty substantial. I can field a lot of calls and email in a day's time. Our conference is in July, but we have a lot of vendors getting ready. Our conference information is on the website, but sometimes they go to the "contact us" section, and I get those. So I just field them back to the website. 🍌

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# Butler Takes Position as KACP Accreditation Manager

Independence Chief Shawn Butler has served as a police officer for more than 27 years. He is a graduate of Northern Kentucky University with a degree in law enforcement, and he has completed the Criminal Justice Executive Development Program. In 2004, Butler was named "Kentucky Police Chief of the Year" by the Kentucky Association of Chiefs of Police. In 2005, Chief Butler graduated from the FBI National Academy, Session 220, in Quantico, Va.

Butler's involvement with the KACP Accreditation Program began in 1999 as the accreditation manager for the Independence Police Department and as an assessor for KACP. He has been involved with the program for more than 13 years, and performed more than 75 assessments of agencies completing the program. Butler also has taught a class with Mike Bischoff for the past three years, teaching agencies how to become accredited. ■

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